

REMARKS

The Official Action mailed October 17, 2007 has been carefully considered. Claims 1-3 and 5-14 stand rejected. Claim 6 has been cancelled. Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

Claim Amendments

Claim 6 has been cancelled.

Rejections Under 35 USC §112

Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 USC §112 as being indefinite. As claim 6 has now been cancelled, it is respectfully asserted that the rejection under 35 USC §112 has been rendered moot.

Rejections Under 35 USC §102 and §103

Claims 1-2 and 7-11 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Reihns et al, U.S. Patent No. 6,652,669.

As an initial matter, Applicants disagree with the assertion that the reference teaches that adhesion promoters are optional with the use of a thiol compositions. See *Office Action*, page 4 (October 17, 2007).

In addition to the above, Applicants note that the reference also does not disclose, nor suggest all of the steps set forth in the claimed method. More specifically, the reference does not appear to disclose drying or curing the treated metal, wherein a coating consistently essentially of said thiol compound is formed directly on the metal surface.

As may be appreciated from review of the '669 reference, the methodology appears to required the step of treating or sealing the aluminum support in hot water or water vapor at a temperature of 50 to 100 °C. See Abstract, Claim 1, and Col. 2, lines 24-33. As may be appreciated, such sealing would appear to be in addition to any anodonic oxidation and reacts with any oxides formed on the aluminum surface, converting the oxide to its hydrated form. Thus, the hydrophobic or oleophobic coating provided is not provided onto the metal surface, but

rather onto the sealed metal surface. Accordingly, it would appear that the reference fails to disclose the presently claimed subject matter and it is respectfully asserted that the rejection under 35 USC §102 should be withdrawn.

* * *

Claims 1-3, 5-11 and 13-14 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 10-001784. The '784 reference appears to disclose a galvanized steel sheet characterized by having a coating comprising a mercaptide compound...or having a coating comprising a thiol compound and a mercaptide compound. See Claim 1 of the English Translation of the '784 reference. Accordingly, the reference fails to disclose the presently claimed subject matter and it is respectfully asserted that the rejection under 35 USC §102 should be withdrawn.

* * *

Claims 1-2 and 7-11 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Nozawa et al. (Corrosion Science, 39(9), pp 1625-1639, 1997). As previously noted, claim 1 includes the limitation that the metal is selected from the group consisting of hot rolled steel sheet, cold-rolled steel sheet, hot-dipped metallic coated steel sheets, electroplated metallic coated steel sheets, aluminum sheets, aluminum alloy sheets, zinc sheets, and zinc alloy sheets. Nozawa does not disclose treating such metal sheets but rather an iron surface, which appears to be composed of Fe(100). See page 1626 through 1627. Fe(100) is not steel. Therefore, the reference does not disclose the presently claimed subject matter and it is respectfully asserted that the rejection under 35 USC §102 should be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 USC §103

Claims 3 and 12 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable individually over Reihs, et al., and Nozawa. In addition, claim 12 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 10-001784. However, as claims 3 and 12 depend either directly or

indirectly from independent claim 1 it is respectfully asserted that these claims define over the cited references and that the rejections should be withdrawn.

Having dealt with the rejections raised by the Examiner, it is respectfully submitted that the present application, as amended, is in condition for allowance. Thus, early allowance is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner desires personal contact for further disposition of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned Attorney at 603.668.6560.

In the event there are any fees due, please charge them to our Deposit Account No. 50-2121.

Respectfully submitted,

By: /Donald J. Perreault/
Donald J. Perreault
Reg. No. 40,126
55 South Commerical Street
Manchester, NH 03101
Phone: 603-668-6560